

15635
Z9B655

The Blood-Red Km
or the
Fatal Bridge

Hollinger

pH 8.5

Mill R. 1000

635
9
55
by 1

B 655.

THE

LOOD-RED KNIGHT,

OR THE

FATAL BRIDGE.

A GRAND MELODRAMATIC ROMANCE,

IN TWO ACTS.



First performed in New-York, on Monday evening, August 4th, 1823, under the direction of Mr. Blythe, of Astley's Amphitheatre, London, and published from the original manuscript by his kind permission.



NEW-YORK.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE
Circulating Library and Dramatic Repository,
No. 4 CHAMBER-STREET.

.....
1823.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ,



Alphonso,	-	-	-	MR. DINNEFORD.
Sir Rowland, (<i>the Blood-Red Knight</i>)	TATNALL.			
Charles,	-	-	-	WILLIAMS.
Oliver,	-	-	-	PARKER.
Peter,	-	-	-	ROBERTS.
Frederick,	-	-	-	LAWSON.
Edgar,	-	-	-	RAMAGE,
Lady Isabella,	-	-	-	MRS. TATNALL.
Emma,	-	-	-	CARNES.
Henry, (<i>Alphonso's Child</i>)				MISS MONIER.
Peasants, Guards, Equestrians, &c.				

TMP92-008669

THE BLOOD-RED KNIGHT.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Woody Glen, Mountains, &c. on one side a large withered Oak, and a rustic seat under it. Isabella discovered decorating the head of her infant son with flowers.—Emma, the companion of her flight, reading a letter.

Isabella. Sweet pledge of love, accept a mother's kiss, alas! it is all she has left to bestow. Hark! what mean those martial sounds, away dear Emma, and let me know the worse that fate decrees.

Emma. (returning) Away, away, dear lady, safety is not here—far on the hill's a troop of horse appear, the Blood-Red Knight approaches our retreat.

Isabella is almost distracted at this intelligence, and snatching her child to her bosom, rushes off, followed by *Emma*.—*A March* is heard, the Blood-Red Knight's party, both horse and foot, are seen crossing the mountains; all the Peasants come on from the back of the stage, and are anxiously viewing the Cavalcade. A party of infantry enter and range on the stage, as a troop of horse do immediately on the opposite. The male and female peasants come down the stage during the symphony of the Chorus—the Blood-Red Knight dashes across the mountains on horseback, full speed, and arrives on the stage while they sing the following Chorus:

CHORUS.

Behold the brave Sir Rowland
 Comes conquering from the fight,
 His sires of old were firm and bold,
 And he's call'd the Blood-Red Knight.
 Let the brazen trumpet sound
 His triumph in the fight,
 In songs of praise your voices raise
 To the fame of the Blood-Red Knight.

Sir Row This greeting shows your fealty; now mark me, the lady Isabella and her son, having fled from the castle during my absence, he who discovers their retreat and brings them back, shall receive the reward of a thousand marks.

This is generally heard, and all bow assent to the orders of the Blood-Red Knight, which they testify in the following Chorus:

All hail! all hail! all hail!
 To the brave Sir Rowland,
 The Blood-Red Knight obey,
 In search of Isabella let's quickly haste
 For so says the great Sir Rowland, [away,
 And who then dare say nay,
 In search of Isabella, away, away, away.

The Peasants go off at different sides repeating this chorus, bowing as they exit. March, the infantry go off first and the horse follow. Oliver and Charles take their leave of Sir Rowland and exit in pursuit of the fugitives--The Blood-Red Knight exits over the mountains, and the scene closes.

SCENE II.—*A Thick Wood.*

Enter LADY ISABELLA and CHILD.

Isabella. Oh, my child, whither shall we fly for safety?

Child. Into the Cavern, dear mama, my cruel uncle will not think to find us there.

Enter EMMA hastily.

Emma. Away, away, dear lady ! we are pursued. Hark, I hear footsteps, away, away.

The lady Isabella and her son rush off, Emma follows, and in her fright drops the letter on the stage ; at that moment Oliver enters as if in pursuit and espies the letter.

Oliver. What's here, a letter, (picks it up) to Emma too, I'll peruse it.

“ Dear Emma,

“ Let not my rival, Oliver, supplant me in your affections, for however warm his expressions of love may be, they boast not the fervency and truth that warms the heart of your faithful

CHARLES.”

Oliver. So, 'tis thus my faithful vows of constancy for ten years are repaid,

Oliver at reading this seems much distressed—Charles now enters, and Oliver shows him the letter.

Oliver. Observe those lines, say, are they consistent with that honor which should mark a warrior and a friend.

Charles. They suit the proud pre-eminence I hold in her affections—her heart is mine, and 'tis a prize life itself I would sooner yield.

Oliver. Indeed ! this then shall decide it.

Oliver obliges him to draw, when a combat ensues, and they fight off.

SCENE III.—Interior of a Cavern.

A rude seat and table, as the retreat of a refugee, and on a side piece of rock the following inscription :

“ IN THIS WRETCHED RETREAT THE WIFE AND CHILD OF ALPHONSO SOUGHT REFUGE FROM THE PERSECUTION OF THE BLOOD-RED KNIGHT.”

The Lady Isabella and Child are discovered at the table, with a few refreshments before them; their terrors are such that they can hardly support themselves—Emma goes to the mouth of the cave and tells her all is safe—Isabella presses the child to her bosom, bedews its face with her tears, the infant looks pitifully in her face.

Child. Don't cry dear mama, Heaven will not let my cruel uncle hurt us.

Isabella. Sweet innocent, there rests our only hope. Almighty power! who knows our every wish, grant mine, to see Alphonso once again.

A noise is heard of swords clashing—they start horror struck, and give themselves up for lost—they retreat agitated into an inner cave. Enter Oliver and Charles struggling, who defends himself with his sword, of which he is at length deprived, and seeks safety from his opponent in the inner cave—Oliver is pursuing him closely, when a scream from within is heard—Charles returns, preceded by Isabella, the child and Emma, and an interesting picture is formed—Isabella intreats their pity, Oliver beholds them with surprise, and divided between rage and interest knowing the great reward, determines to wreak his vengeance at a future time upon his rival.

Oliver. What do I see! Isabella, her child and Emma, this is indeed unlook'd for, and thus!

Isabella. Do not harm a mother and her helpless child—Shield us from a tyrant's power, and Heaven—

Oliver. Has nought to do with us, interest is our God, and this our golden chance.—Charles, your hand—let's bury former animosity—the time is apt—these wanderers secured, the Blood Red Knight will grant us ample recompence. As to Emma, gain her he who can.

Isabella and Child are drag'd off by Oliver &c.

SCENE IV.—*Outside of Alphonso's castle.*

Enter PETER.

Peter. Oh Jemmine Gig ! here's a smoking hot morning—I wonder how the people can lie stewing in bed. Here I have been up these three hours, I don't mean lying with the tongue no, no, here I am as fresh as a lark—well now I remember— (*trumpet heard*) Oh, here come those that will put an end to all my habits of talking to myself.

Sir Rowland enters on horseback, followed by his party, both horse and foot—they go across the stage, the Blood Red Knight returns.

Sir R. Still wayward fortune mars my bold design. My brother in the Holy Wars has fell—he sleeps in death, and Isabella now by right is mine : she scorns my love, and flies from that protection my brother taught her to expect from me. No matter—I've spies abroad shall force her back again. Once regain'd, no power on earth shall tear her from my determined grasp.

Peter. Many good mornings to your lordship, and though the lady Isabella and her son have fled the castle, there is plenty left to welcome you.

Sir R. Silence, fool.

Peter. Silence, fool. (*aside*) But had I been the means of getting rid of my lord on purpose to obtain his brother's wife, my conscience would have made me as cross grain'd as he is.

Peter opens the castle gates and Sir Rowland enters—, but as he passes Peter, he says ‘ Psha ! ’

Peter. Psha ! what does he mean by psha ?

Have I lived all these days to be called Psha ?
 No matter, if I had as much guilt on my conscience as you have, I should be cross-grained as yourself. Ah, my dear Alphonso, now I am alone, I will just run over your history.

SONG.

Alphonso he went to the wars,
 A brave and a valiant knight ;
 Sir Rowland afraid of scars,
 For a coward he is down right.
 Alphonso left his wife and child
 In the care of his loving brother :
 But he caused them with grief to run wild ;
 So off ran the child and the mother.
 Sir Rowland he was very mad,
 And uproarious call'd me fellow,
 So to keep up my spirits sad,
 I got most monstrous mellow.

Then a knight they made of me,
 When so drunk I could not see ;
 But they dubb'd me Peter the Great,
 A Knight of the Castle Gate—
 And a knight of the gate made me.

(exit into the castle.

SCENE V.—*A kind of bay bordering on Alphonso's domain--distant view of the sea.*

A most majestic, splendid galley appears, filled with the Knights of the Crusade—appropriate banners—The various knights quit the galley, as does Alphonso. A banner bearer following in between every knight, the banner bearer and the knight then range in a line fronting the audience.

Alph. Once more my friends, we tread on British ground,

Our mother earth with valor's laurels crown'd.
Hail, happy Isle! where honors dare preside,
The nursling of the brave, the good man's pride.
Still may each king his hallow'd rights defend;
His nation's guardian and his people's friend.
Let our triumphant banners be unfurld,
The dread and terror of an envious world.

The knights salute Alphonso as their chief, then, at his signal, the banners being lowered, they all swear on them, when Alphonso orders them by action to their original position.

Alph. Now then, my friends, let each one seek his home, and meet the sweet return that love to valor owes. And when again our country calls us forth, we'll prove ourselves men.

The knights and banner men then range—a knight and a banner man, and so march, saluting Alphonso as they go off. It must be remembered that Frederick and Edgar are on in the scene. Alphonso orders the two sailors belonging to the galley to bring forward the chest, out of the galley, which contains three pilgrims' dresses.

Alph. We will attire ourselves in pilgrims' dresses, for fear our sudden appearance might alarm my much loved Isabella.

Frederic and Edgar assist Alphonso with his dress, as do the two sailors assist them with their disguises. Alphonso pourtrays his love for Isabella and exit, giving strict charge of secrecy to all about him.—*ex-eunt omnes.*

SCENE VI.—*Exterior of Alphonso's castle.*

Isabella and child brought on by Oliver and Charles with guards—they ring at the bell. Peter comes out, and they go into the castle..

Peter. Oh dear, oh dear, what would my

dear master Alphonso say, if he knew Sir Rowland used my dear lady so cruelly.

(Exit into the castle.

Alphonso, Frederic and Edgar now enter—Alphonso then desires Edgar to ring the bell, which he does, and Peter comes out—they make signs that they stand in need of succour. But they are repulsed by Peter, who informs them, by signs, that he cannot do any thing for them, and shuts the castle gate. This rather enrages Alphonso, who orders Edgar, once more, to ring the bell: Peter comes out, which produces the following

DUETT.

Edgar. Ah Warden, good warden, we beg a small boon,

From the lord of this castle so great and so good ;
From Palestine's land, and the great Prophet's tomb,
Sad and wearied our limbs, and exhausted our food ;
With staff, scrip and shell, our feet bare and sore ;
'Neath yon mansion we'd gladly repose.

Peter. To the Prophet my friends, return once more,

For here you'll get nothing but blows.

Edgar. Does so great a pagan in this fair castle dwell,

As a pilgrim to drive from his gate ?

His name ?

Peter. Sir Rowland, the Blood Red Knight known well,

On his frown Death and Terror await.

Edgar. Sir Rowland the Good, base caitiff thou liest,
How darest thou thus defame thy lord ?

We're friends of his house, recant, or thou diest,
His vengeance now rests on his sword.

(Peter appears much terrified.

Suppose from Alphonso, some news, friend, we bear,
His sufferings, his death, or the like ?

Peter. Your news. If he lives, still we'll banish
our care :

If dead, friends you're welcome to strike.

*Alphonso discovers himself by throwing open his disguise
—Peter in ecstacy exclaims " ALPHONSO ! "*

Alph. Behold your rightful lord, Alphonso.

Peter. Oh my dear master, I am so glad you are return'd—but all is not right in the castle : Sir Rowland has designs on my lady—but under this disguise, you will learn more than I can tell you.

Alph. Retire, my friends, within call—I'll be alone, and watch my opportunity to preserve my wife, and punish a tyrant brother.

Exit into the castle—Frederic & Edgar wish him success and exit. Peter rubs his hands with joy, and sings the following

SONG.

Oh lad, I shall go mad with joy,
And so will lady too ;
Poor soul, no more she'll mope and cry,
As she's been used to do.
I'll give the word, mirth shall go round,
And brighten ev'ry eye ;
The bells in merry peals shall sound,
And all be endless joy.
Ting ring, ting ring and ting ring,
Over our castle walls shall sing.
We'll roast the ox ; bonfires we'll make ;
The burning ale shall fly ;
Old Care his addled pate shall break,
And all get drunk for joy. (*Exit into the castle.*)

SCENE VII.—A splendid Apartment.

A full length portrait of Alphonso in the centre of the scene, in ornour. Two rich sofas, painted conformable to the scene ; a rich covered table ; ink stand, &c. Sir Rowland discovered at his table, writing—rises, comes forward, and rings the bell—old Peter enters, bowing.

Sir R. Speak, caitiff ! have you heard any tidings of the lady Isabella and her son ?

Peter. Tidings, my lord?

Sir R. Ay, tidings.

Peter. Now if his lordship was to know—
(aside.)

Sir R. What means that muttering?

Peter. Muttering, my lord! I was only saying, that if my lord, Alphonso was to return, what would your lordship say!

Sir R. Peace, fool! *(he retires and seats himself on the sofa.)* Leave me.

Peter. O yes, I will leave you, and I'll send some body to you. How surprised he will be to hear of my lord Alphonso's return! Fool, indeed! *(exit.)*

At this moment enter Oliver and Charles, Peter conducting the lady Isabella, the Child and Emma.

Sir. R. Ah! by all my hopes, the lady Isabella and her son. Madam, you shall not again escape me—once more you are in my power, nor shall you quit this castle, till force or kind consent has made you mine.

Isabella. You have no right to keep us here as your prisoners: therefore, in the face of all, I now demand liberty for myself, and brave Alphonso's child.

Sir R. Weak woman, you sue in vain—you know the only way to gain your freedom—compliance.

Isab. Never!

Sir R. Then away with the child. Slaves, obey me!

Isab. Oh do not take my child from me—rather plunge your daggers in my breast.

Sir R. He but reminds me of my hated rival—away with him.

Oliver takes up the child, and Charles seizes Emma—Isabella now throws herself at the feet of the tyrant, and intreats him to be merciful. Sir Rowland appears wavering in his determination, and at last orders them off.—Emma and the child are dragged off, notwithstanding many attempts of Isabella to prevent them—she is about to follow them, but is stopped by Sir Rowland, who asks her if she will comply with his desires.

Sir R. Now madam, hear, nor force me by cold disdain to work the harm of one I dearly love. You see no human power can snatch you from me, be wise, nor slight the freedom which I offer.

Isabella starts with indignation, and pointing to heaven, asks him if he has forgot the vow he made when his brother (pointing to the picture) left her under his protection.

Isab. Have you forgot the vow you made Alphonso? Is it thus you protect your brother's wife and child? Shame! shame! where is thy blush?

Sir Rowland hears this, and for a moment it seems to startle him from his purpose, that had begun to work upon him—he recovers, and immediately seizes her in his arms—she breaks from him—he follows her closely, and just as he thinks to clasp her in his arms, Alphonso rushes in between them, as the Pilgrim—Sir Rowland is struck with amazement—Alphonso bows respectfully—Sir Rowland, recovering, speaks.

Sir R. Speak, stranger, by what authority have you thus dared to intrude upon my privacy?

Alph. Pardon me, my lord, a sudden faintness overcame me, at the sight of that lady, whose husband—

Sir R. Well, what of him?

Alph. Was my dearest friend.

Lou'. Was! Ah that single word. I know

the rest—he's dead—he's dead—and I am left forlorn.

Alph. No, dear lady, he lives, and I have brought news of his safe return.

Alphonso is about to present a letter to Isabella, when Sir Rowland rushes in between them and snatches the letter out of his hand, and tears it to pieces—he forces Alphonso off in his disguise, and Isabella follows him, but is prevented by Sir Rowland.

Lab. Monster, infringe not on thy brother's rights. Thank heaven he lives, and soon will punish thy temerity.

Sir R. Indeed ! he must be prompt, lady, then, for this moment's mine. No longer will I humbly sue for pardon : but thus secure the bliss you would deny me.

His haughty spirit is roused by this, and tells her, by action, that he is resolved to make use of the present advantage—he seizes her—and he is about to throw her on a sofa, when Alphonso enters in the back ground, still as the Pilgrim, and rushes between them—he seizes Sir Rowland and dashes him to the ground—Sir Rowland, for the moment is lost in amazement, to find his hopes frustrated, but soon recovering, he is about to cleave Alphonso down, with his sword, when Alphonso throws off his disguise—a tender embrace takes place between him and his wife. The child at this moment runs in, crying “ Father, Father”—he takes the child up and kisses it. Sir Rowland is horror struck, and trembles with remorse.

Alph. Well may'st thou tremble, monster, as thou art. Behold thy injured brother, to save his dear wife from hellish perfidy like thine.

Sir Rowland rushes upon Alphonso with his sword drawn, and is about to cleave him down, when Alphonso avoids the blow and is obliged to defend him-

self. Sir Rowland, after a severe struggle in the combat, which now takes place is disarmed and thrown to the ground—at this moment Oliver and Charles rush in to Sir Rowland's assistance—a combat of three now takes place between Alphonso, Oliver and Charles, when Alphonso is disarmed—Sir Rowland rings the bell, and Peter enters.

Alph. What, would you make a prisoner of your rightful lord Alphonso ?

Sir Row. (to Peter) Sieze him, I say.

Pet. No, we will perish first !

Sir Row. Die then !

He stabs Peter, who falls, and is borne off by Oliver and Charles—they return immediately, and in the attempt of seizing Alphonso, he defends himself, and a furious combat takes place. He is disarmed and taken prisoner and borne off by the guards. Sir Rowland rings the bell, and one of the attendants enters. He gives directions, by action, to watch the actions of lady Isabella—she entreats and kneels.

Sir Row. Entreaties are in vain, you have heard my fixed resolve ; I leave you to reflection. Guard, you know your duty. Remember Lady, on your decision rests Alphonso's life.

Exit.

Isabella almost heart broken, sinks on the sofa, when the scene closes on them.

SCENE VIII.—*Outside of a Strong Tower.*

Enter Frederic.

Fred. The hour is past, and yet Alphonso comes not—my mind migives me, sure Sir Rowland has not discovered him. Ah, some one approaches, and with them a prisoner, I'll retire and unseen observe their actions.

retires behind the wing.

Oliver and Charles with 8 soldiers enter, conducting Alphonso brought on in chains; Oliver unlocks the prison gate, and Alphonso is dragged in the Tower. Oliver and Charles go into the tower, and the guards go off. Frederic comes forward.

Fred. Distraction! my honor'd lord a prisoner, shall he then fall a victim to Sir Rowland's hate—no, I'll follow at a distance, he shall not die while this arm can hold a dagger. He then takes the key from off the bunch, and then replaces them in the door: but hearing some one coming from (inside) the tower, he retires to his hiding place, when Oliver comes out

Oliver. How's this, the guard removed; whose orders—no matter, instantly will I replace them, for strongly do I suspect some treachery.

Exit.

Frederic now comes forth with the key, and with a heart overpowered with joy, enters the tower, with the hope of liberating his master. Oliver now enters with six soldiers who all enter the prison and the scene closes.

SCENE IX.—*Inside of the Tower.*

With a circular staircase from the ceiling. Lamp, &c
Alphonso is brought on, down the staircase, by Charles, bearing a lighted torch, which he sticks in the stage, followed by Oliver.

Oliver. Why did you remove the guard? know you not the charge entrusted to our keeping, instantly replace them, and henceforth be more careful or Sir Rowland shall hear of your neglect, away!

Exit up the stairs.

Alph. Is then a dungeon's gloom the fruit of all my toils, my bright reward for victory won in Palestine! Consider well what 'tis you do,

I am the rightful lord of these domains, a wife and child depend upon my life, 'tis they who force me thus to sue for freedom ; effect it, and you shall find Alphonso's not ungrateful.

Oliver. You plead in vain, Sir Rowland is our lord, and his commands are ever sacred.

Oliver is about to fasten him by his chain, through a ring to the ground, Alphonso starts, and springing on him, forces the sword from his belt, and plunging it in Oliver's breast—he falls and expires. Alphonso returns thanks to Heaven for this deliverance—he runs up the steps, but immediately returns, and stripping off his cloak, hastily removes the doublet from the dead body of Oliver ; he disguises himself in it, and muffles the body in his cloak—he has scarcely done this, when Charles returns, Frederic following softly unseen, and hides. Charles gives directions to the two soldiers, that he brought with him, with lighted torches.

Charles. Soldiers take your stations at the southern part of the tower, and remember your lives depend upon the prisoner's safety, away. *(exit Soldiers.*

Charles seeing Alphonso, as he supposes, on the ground, is about to raise him—Alphonso however prevents him, telling him he is safely secured : but in order to avoid suspicion, takes the chains surly, and fastens them round the body, and bidding him lead the way, Charles takes the lighted torch and ascends the stairs ; Alphonso follows, threatening him as he ex-its up the stair. The stage becomes gradually dark, when Frederic comes from his hiding place, and gropes about, in hopes of finding Alphonso. He at last succeeds and feels his master's cloak, which he takes from off the body—he is so overpow-ered with grief, that he falls senseless on the ground. He recovers shortly, and kneels to heaven—he takes up his sword and vows revenge on the persecutors of his master, and exit up the staircase. Scene closes.

SCENE X.—*Outside of the Castle as before.*

Charles, and Alphonso disguised as Oliver, come out, when Charles going to lock the door, finds the key won't turn, he uses many endeavours but in vain; he tries several others in the same bunch, but all to no purpose—he seems much puzzled, while Alphonso, to cover the deception, accuses Charles of having secreted the key in order to release the prisoner: this he denies, and surlily gives the keys to Alphonso; who to carry on the business, makes several attempts secretly expressing his surprise at the strange manner in which the key has been lost—he then exits with Charles, each with different feelings, consequently with different correspondent actions Frederic now comes forth from the tower with the cloak, he draws his sword, and swearing to be revenged on his master's murderers, and goes off in search of them.
Change of scene.

SCENE XI.—*The Blood-Red Knight's Chamber as before—Table, Sofa, Ink-stand, &c.*

Enter Sir Rowland musing and meditating the death of his brother Alphonso, who disguised as Oliver, and Charles follow him on the stage.

Sir Row. My hated rival, then, you have seen secured beyond the power of intruding here?

Char. We have, my lord; Oliver and myself have confin'd him in the lower dungeon of the southern tower.

Sir Row. (to *Charles*) Enough, retire—hold, conduct the lady Isabella to my presence.

Alphonso is rushing off with Charles, but Sir R. suddenly stops him.

Sir Row. Oliver, I wish some private conference with you now we're alone; accept this purse, (*he refuses*) nay, I insist, I know I can depend on you. Behold this dagger

should Isabella still prove obstinate—you understand me, Alphonso must die.

Alph. (*aside*) This from my brother!

Sir Row. Oliver, conduct the lady Isabella hither.

Alphonso goes off for the purpose of bringing the lady Isabella, and as he gets to the wing he is stopped short, for Isabella, the child and Emma are brought in by Charles.

Sir Row. You have done well, anon I'll call for you.

Exit Charles.

Alphonso casts a piteous and fearful look towards her, but is unable to make himself known, in consequence of the attendants who enter with her, and who have been placed as a watch over her. Sir Rowland orders them off, during which Alphonso takes her by the hand, in order to communicate the secret, but she snatches it from him with disdain—Sir Rowland then turning at the noise, Alphonso holds the dagger over her, telling Sir Rowland by action she wanted to escape. Sir Rowland bids him wait within eail, and orders him off. Alphonso with folded arms views his traitor brother with looks of indignation and contempt and retires.

Sir Row. Now lady, on you depends your husband's future fate. Will Isabella, to save her husband's life, lie to the adoring Rowland with her love?

Isa. Gladly will I yield my estates, but never will I stain his honor.

Sir Row. Once more, will you comply?

Isa. Never!

Sir Rowland at this becomes more and more enraged.

Sir Row. Nay then, who waits there! (*he stamps furiously, Alphonso enters.*) You know my orders, Isabella's obstinacy has sealed her husband's doom, haste to the southern tower,

your trusty blade must drink Alphonso's blood.

Alphonso as Oliver is hurrying off for that purpose, when Isabella rushes towards him, and catches hold of his garment, and implores his pity.

Isa. Mercy, mercy ! 'tis a suffering wife entreats—O spare him ! spare him !

Sir Row. Away, despatch your prisoner !

Alphonso casts a piteous look of anguish on her, but meeting Sir Rowland's eye, he spurns her from him, and exit. She now becomes frantic, kneels, prays, he beholds her unmoved, and tells her 'tis too late—she has no one to thank but herself—she tells him all the curses of heaven will fall upon his head, and throws herself on the sofa in despair. Alphonso enters, she starts and runs up to him and fixes her eyes on him, asks if he has executed the deed—he trembles, and turns his eyes from her—Sir Rowland demands a proof of the deed, he shews his dagger stain'd with the blood of the real Oliver—she screams, and falls into the arms of the attendant—

Sir Row. You find I can inflict a pang ; but there's one remains (*pointing to the child*) shall wring your stubborn heart still keener.

Isa. Mercy, mercy !

The child is thrown into the trembling arms of its father, who points the dagger to its tender throat—Isabella rushes between them, and stops the blow.

Sir Row. One word alone can stop the destined blow—consent to become mine, that withheld, and the same weapon that slew his father shall hurl him to his grave.

Isabella is scarce able to keep up her strength, nearly fainting away with her distressed situation ; she entreats Sir R. who is inexorable—Isabella at last is forced rather to comply with his wishes, in hope of saving her child's life, and in a faltering tone speaks.

Isa. Grant a wretched mother one short hour, and then expect a final answer.

Alphonso is horror struck with anguish, and can scarcely bear the restraint of discovery. Sir Rowland's dagger all this time has been held to the child's throat, at last consents, and orders the guard to convey her to her chamber.

Sir Row. Convey the lady Isabella to her chamber.

Isabella in a supplicating tone entreats the company of her faithful attendant Emma, this is granted—they are led off by Charles. Alphonso is unconsciously about to follow, but is prevented by Sir R. who orders him to attend him. Alphonso is again attempting to follow, but Sir Rowland furiously stamps and peremptorily orders him to attend him—he at last obeys, casting a look of agony after his wretched wife and child. *Exeunt.*

SCENE XII.—*Another View of the Castle.*

Enter Frederic with downcast eyes, with the cloak of his master—meets Edgar—they swear to Heaven to avenge Alphonso's murder, and are about to exit, when they see some one coming, and retire behind the wing. At this moment Sir Rowland enters, followed by Alphonso, as Oliver, to whom he gives orders about the child's death, and rewards him with a purse—Sir R. exit. With a mind much troubled, Alphonso being left, begins to resolve on the means of saving his wife and child, when Frederic suddenly darts upon him, and shewing the cloak of his beloved master and the key of the door of the dungeon, accuses him with the murder of his lord.

Fred. Draw, villain! and defend thyself.

Aiph. Defend myself—Yes, thus, behold Alphonso (*throws off disguise*) Oh, my friend, my wrongs sit heavy at my heart, my wife, my child—assemble all our friends, a few short moments must either seal their fate or punish a tyrant brother.

Fred. Your vassals are prepared, and only wait to hail you as their leader.

Alph. Conduct me to them, soon shall the Blood-Red Knight learn, that virtue is the safest shield in fight. Lead on. *Exit.*

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Grand Saloon—Chapel Scene.

A grand march of Minstrels—attendants both male and female—and some of the Blood-Red Knight's party on as Noblemen—Frederic and Edgar, and several of their party disguised as Friars with hoods on—Sir Rowland enters and salutes them with smiles—Charles now conducts the lady Isabell, who enters with steady step, leading her child

Sir Row. Friends, Alphonso having died in the holy wars, Isabella bestows her hand and title on Sir Rowland.

Isa. (with firmness) Never!

Sir Row. How, ma'am! have you forgot that Isabella's word is pledged at the forfeit of her child's life. Thus, then, I claim it, (he seizes the child and throws it over to Charles) fulfil your promise, or—

Isa. I will! I will!

Sir Row. 'Tis well! Priest do your office.

Sir R. kisses her hand with rapture, while horror seems to creep through her soul at the touch of her husband's murderer. Alphonso, as the Priest, advances towards her, and asks her whether she gives her consent to the union. She by action says "No," but was partly compelled to do so to preserve her dear child's life. This perfectly satisfies Alphonso of his wife's fidelity and advances towards Sir Row-

land, and informs him by action, that she never will give her consent to their union. This enrages Sir R.

Sir Row. Priest do your office.

Alph. Alphonso bars the base design.

Sir Row. Alphonso ! Guards seize your victim ! He shall not now escape me.

The Knights throw off their cloaks, and a battle takes place between them and the Blood-Red Knight's party. Sir Rowland and Alphonso have a few blows together, and as Alphonso is making his escape, Charles enters, and makes a furious blow at him, which he avoids, and makes his escape through the door.

Charles. To arms ! to arms ! Alphonso's vassals, headed by a numerous troop of horse approach your castle.

Sir Row. Indeed ! then force must be repelled by force. Ring the alarm bell—muster our troops—man well the walls—convey my captives to a place of safety ; instantly let us meet the foe.

The sword we'll wield,
'Till they or us are masters of the field.

Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*Outside of the Castle.*

Alphonso, Frederick and Edgar, with the rest of the Knights rush out of the Castle, when each draws his sword and swears, revenge against Sir Rowland. *Exeunt.*

LAST SCENE.

A Bridge approaching the Castle. Dyke, Battlements, &c.

Alphonso, Frederick, Edgar and their party enter, horse and foot, and give a ~~short~~ *action for*

the different parties to attack the Castle generally, for which purpose they quit the stage. Horse and foot are seen in action on the Bridge—the Castle being forced, the action becomes general on the stage, ramparts, water, and Bridge. Some of the guards are immersed in the water, surrounded by friends and foes—the Castle is at length seen on fire in several places, while the dead and dying, both men and horses, are seen confusedly mixt together. The Blood-Red Knight has a furious combat with Alphonso, who is disarmed by him, and at the moment the Red Knight is about to cleave him down with his sword, Isabella enters and seeing Alphonso's danger she stabs Sir Rowland, who falls and expires. A most interesting picture is formed by Isabella, Alphonso, and the Child, and the curtain falls amid the shouts of the victorious troops of Alphonso.

FINIS.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 016 102 415 6

